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## ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

EYES ONLY

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Discussion with Senior DDO Leadership on Personnel Reductions

FROM: John F. Blake  
Acting Deputy Director of  
Central Intelligence

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

28 November 1977

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and  
building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S  
INITIALSCOMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom  
to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)1. Director of Central  
Intelligence  
7D 5607 Hqs

27 DEC 1977

Stan:

I submitted the attached memorandum for your review one day after I had the meeting with the senior leadership of DDO. It was returned to my office on 25 November. I see no evidence that you, in fact, have read it. I believe the memo contains valuable information for you and I would like the personal satisfaction of knowing that you have read it.

STAT

John F. Blake

Att:

MFR dtd 15 Nov 77, same subj

Distribution:

Orig RS - DCI w/Orig Att  
1 - ADDCI

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15 November 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: John F. Blake  
Acting Deputy Director of  
Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Discussion with Senior DDO Leadership on Personnel Reductions

1. I met on Monday, 14 November, for an hour with senior leadership of the Directorate of Operations. The group was comprised of Chiefs of Divisions and senior Staffs with Messrs. Wells and Shackley present.

2. An outline which guided the discussion is attached. This memorandum endeavors to synthesize the answers to four questions wherein I tried to elicit response.

3. The first question was whether or not a reduction of the Directorate of Operations is necessary. Nineteen of the twenty-one unequivocally answered in the affirmative. One felt a realignment of position assignments to various units in DDO would have been more beneficial than a reduction per se. Another individual stated he would like to amend the question to read "Are cuts necessary or desirable?". His answer then would be they were desirable but not necessary.

4. The second question was whether the order of magnitude, i.e., positions, and the time frame, i.e., two fiscal years, is reasonable. There was here no clear consensus. The closest thing to a consensus was a sizable minority which felt a four-year, as opposed to a two-year, period would have been more in order. There was an underlying theme that positions may have been too deep a cut but no one, at least to my satisfaction, could adequately articulate the reason for that belief. The most telling argument about the size of the cut was based on the statement that no consideration appeared to have been given to the acquisition of new responsibilities by DDO in recent years and emphasis was placed on the cessation of past activities, that led to a surplus situation. The new responsibilities include the heavy weight of work in FOIA and Privacy matters, the highly intensified attention being given to records management, and refined personnel practices. The individual who espouses this argument did use it as a basis for stating the cut should have been stretched out four years instead of the two-year period. Some feeling was also expressed that a more flexible goal should have been established so that by constantly monitoring attrition one could adjust both the time period and the necessity to abolish positions.

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5. The third matter addressed was on the notification procedures used. By slightly expanding the question, points were made by two different individuals and there was a clear consensus of the group to support the points made:

a. The greatest deficiency in the exercise was a failure to give much more advanced notification to individuals who were earmarked for departure so that they could have arranged for their retirement in a more graceful and gracious fashion. It was an "affront to dignity" to force the issue in such a very short period of time.

b. The other point was a variation of the above. It was stated that supergraded officers feel they should have been individually sought out and this matter discussed with them so that they could consider their retirement plans and announce them before the formal exercise was announced and launched. They believed this was owed to them because of their seniority and greater contribution than lower graded and less senior personnel. Some individuals would have extended this principle down to the GS-13 level.

Returning to the more narrow question of notification procedures used, the group was somewhat split on the letters per se. Some commented on the cold and legalistic style and the absence of any expression of appreciation for years of faithful service. Others commented that, bearing in mind the nature of the exercise, there was no alternative to the style used. It was stated that the Division Chiefs asked for the right to give the letters to those who were serving in their component so that they could express the necessary words of compassion. The conversation then drifted somewhat into whether or not the right people were selected. There appeared to be a consensus that below the supergrade level the majority of letters went to those who should have received them. Discussion took place on the shock experienced by some individuals that they were on the list. The counter-point was raised that the DDO personnel counseling system is such that if an employee exercised the initiative to ask where he stood on a peer ranking basis he would have been so notified.

6. The last question was what is the collective reaction in DDO to the totality of the exercise. The two prevailing answers were, first, negative, and secondly, the creation of a thoroughly and generally depressed state of morale. This appears to be particularly true at the GS-14 and -15 level. It was also observed by several that people junior to that grade, still young enough to commence a second career, are seriously considering whether they should remain and run the risk of this type of severance program eventually affecting them. The most unanimous expression of opinion on this "reaction" question was "Why is only DDO selected?".

7. I should also like to record several deeply felt expressions of opinion not directly related to the reduction exercise that came up at several points during the session. Those expressions of opinion were:

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a. The Director should stop accepting on faith allegations or criticisms voiced by younger groups of officers he meets with and demand proof from them of the charges.

b. The Director continually meets with various middle-grade and/or younger groups and hears their complaints but does not, or will not, give equal time to senior management to answer these complaints and to defend their position. *ps - weekly lunches now*

c. There is still too much tendency to look on things that happened in the past and rehash them. *- ? I'm trying to avoid them best*

STAT

ohn F. Blake

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Attachment

*Good point, except that what junior officers "think" is also important to morale, retention, etc. I have never (to my knowledge) taken action on these ideas w/o going back thru the system.*

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14 NOVEMBER 1977

SECOND TIME I HAVE ASKED TO MEET WITH DDO LEADERSHIP.

- A. FIRST WAS AUGUST 1974 AFTER I BECAME DDA.  
MET AT THAT TIME TO ASSURE DDO SENIOR LEADERSHIP  
OF MY SUPPORT (AND THE SUPPORT OF THE DIRECTORATE  
OF ADMINISTRATION) FOR THEIR MISSION AND TO STATE  
SEVERAL CHANGES OF POLICY, INHERITED FROM MY  
PREDECESSOR, THAT I WAS CHANGING.
- B. DESIRE TO MEET TODAY TO EXPLAIN TWO ROLES I POSSESS:
  - 1. AS ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR I HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY  
TO SUPPORT THE DECISIONS OF THE DCI.
  - 2. AS THE SENIOR RANKING CAREER OFFICER OF THE AGENCY  
I HAVE A CONCOMITANT RESPONSIBILITY TO UNDERSTAND  
THE CONCERNS OF THE SENIOR CAREER OFFICERS OF THE  
AGENCY, TO REFLECT THESE CONCERNS TO THE DIRECTOR,  
AND ENSURE THAT I GIVE HIM SOUND ADVICE TO CONSIDER  
WHEN MAKING HIS DECISIONS.
- C. MUST BE OBVIOUS I WISH TO DISCUSS THE MATTER OF THE DDO  
PERSONNEL REDUCTIONS. SEVERAL QUESTIONS COME TO MIND  
REGARDING THEM:
  - 1. WERE THEY NECESSARY?
  - 2. WAS THE NUMBER OF POSITIONS IN THE TWO-YEAR FISCAL  
PERIOD ABOUT RIGHT?
  - 3. WERE APPROPRIATE NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES USED?
  - 4. THE REACTION OF YOUR PEOPLE TO THE CURRENT SITUATION.

HOLD DECISION ON THESE POINTS

I WILL REFLECT YOUR VIEWS TO THE DCI, MEANTIME LET ME LEAVE SOME THOUGHTS WITH YOU:

- A. LAWFULLY APPOINTED AUTHORITY HAS MADE A DECISION, YOUR LIKING IT OR NOT IS A PERSONAL VALUE JUDGMENT, FROM A PROFESSIONAL POINT OF VIEW, IN YOUR LEADERSHIP ROLE, IT APPEARS TO ME YOU OFFICIALLY SUPPORT IT OR YOU SHOULD CONSIDER YOUR OWN FUTURE.
- B. AT THE SAME TIME, IT IS UNDERSTOOD AND ENCOURAGED THAT THE GREATEST AMOUNT OF COMPASSION SHOULD BE SHOWN THOSE WHO ARE LEAVING THE CS.
- C. YOU HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO REFLECT THESE PHILOSOPHIES TO YOUR OWN SUBORDINATES IN SUPERVISORY POSITIONS.
- D. MUCH INTEREST IN THE AGENCY "LEADERSHIP." YOU NOW HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE AND PRACTICE IT.
- E. EQUAL TALK ABOUT PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE--AGAIN AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE IT.

MORALE CANNOT BE MANDATED NOR CAN ONE MANDATE AGREEMENT WITH DECISIONS. ONE CAN EXPECT, HOWEVER, INSTITUTIONAL LOYALTY AND YOU SHOULD DISPLAY IT, DEMAND IT FROM YOUR BRANCH CHIEFS, AND HAVE THEM INSTILL IT IN THEIR PEOPLE.